

MAGID-6

27 February 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence
SUBJECT : MAGID Study--Improving First-Line
Supervision in the DDI

Introduction

There is a widespread feeling in the DDI that first-line supervision (i.e., by branch chiefs) needs improvement. This view has been manifested, for example, in remarks by the DDI himself and by comments from employees of various staffs and offices. A common complaint is that branch chiefs are selected on the basis of criteria that have little to do with management, that they often quickly demonstrate a lack of administrative skills, and that little is done either before or after they become branch chiefs to develop these skills.

While the well recognized high quality of the DDI production, processing, and collection effort must reflect a good deal of strength at branch chief levels, there is clearly room for upgrading. MAGID believes that: (1) the selection of first-line supervisors can be made to take more account than it now does of managerial talents; (2) training for both new and longtime branch chiefs should be more intensive than is currently the case (at present training often amounts only to on-the-job exposure to other supervisors' techniques); and (3) increased organizational flexibility could help improve the quality of both first-line management and the substantive product.

Recommendations

1. Selection

a. Potential branch chiefs should be given more opportunities, as

(1) Acting branch chiefs. Higher management's capabilities for rating potential branch chiefs would be improved by rotating

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such opportunities within the branch, and, occasionally, on an inter-branch basis.

(2) Project leaders/coordinators. Responsibility for some cross-branch projects now normally handled by branch chiefs, should be assigned to potential branch chiefs.

(3) Office/staff (or Area or Division) representatives at meetings with other agencies or offices.

Seniority should be a secondary consideration in the selection of individuals for these opportunities. Branch chiefs also should be encouraged to share more responsibility within their branches. Responsibility: Office, Staff and Branch Chiefs.

b. One or more DDI offices, staffs, or services should be designated to run experimental programs in conjunction with the Assessments and Research Branches of the Psychological Services Staff in the DDM&S in an attempt to identify potential branch chiefs.

The Staff provides a variety of personnel-related support services. It has devoted most of its support effort to the DDO, aiding, for example, in selection of CTs

work with DDI components--helping to identify promising applicants for employment as OSR analysts and researching the possible similarity of skills needed by FBIS editors, translators, and analysts. OSR is very pleased with the usefulness of this activity to date; the FBIS program is still in an early stage. More pertinent to the first-line management problem, the Staff is about to begin a program aimed at identifying managerial potential in OJCS. The Assessments Center approach places candidates in a series of realistic but simulated management problems.

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An Assessments Center program would require roughly a week's time for several top-line supervisors who themselves would act as assessors. The assessors' experiences would, of course, be beneficial in and of themselves. Responsibility: O/DDI

MAGID also recommends that the DDI Management Staff monitor the progress of the OJCS program, particularly if the DDI would prefer to move more cautiously with the Assessments Center than suggested above. MAGID further recommends that the O/DDI ensure that Directorate managers are aware of the Assessment Center and other assessment activities of the Psychological Services Staff. The Center seems to MAGID to be a potentially important personnel evaluation tool.

2. Training

- a. New and prospective branch chiefs should be sent to the one-week OTR course, Fundamentals of Management and Supervision. Only a few DDI elements currently sent representatives--often relatively low-level supervisors--despite agreement among participants that it gives excellent training in coping with common personnel problems. Responsibility: Office and Staff Chiefs
- b. New and prospective DDI branch chiefs also should be required to attend the Advanced Management Program (AMP). This new Agency-wide course was developed with major inputs from DDI representatives and was well-received by DDI people--some of whom were first-line managers--who attended the AMP pilot run last September. Future runnings will have more emphasis on such topics as leadership effectiveness, career development and management by objectives--all critical subjects in current DDI management. Responsibility: Office and Staff Chiefs.
- c. Older branch chiefs would benefit from these courses and a Directorate-wide effort should be made to encourage their attendance. Responsibility: Office and Staff Chiefs.

- d. With the emphasis on the above courses, MAGID recommends some change in DDI personnel scheduling for the Mid-Career Program and the Advanced Intelligence Seminar. DDI nominees to the Mid-Career program should be taken from the pool of "comers" at the GS-12 (or GS-13) level. Similarly, the AIS should be reserved for managers in the GS 13-15 range who have had several years of management experience and for other senior analysts and service people. The Mid-Career and AIS provide more of an orientation to priorities and operations of the Intelligence Community rather than to management per se. Responsibility: Office and Staff Chiefs.
- e. A survey should be made of US "think tanks"-- RAND, Brookings, A.D. Little, etc., to determine if they have uncovered any particularly successful techniques for training, selecting, and/or evaluating project leaders. If so, applicability to the DDI should be determined, preferably using test programs. Responsibility: DDI Management Staff.

3. Organization

- a. Both administration and substance sometimes suffer from the close linkage between grade levels and supervisory responsibilities. As long as the evidence indicates that pay and prestige go with being a branch chief, there will be many first-class analysts without strong managerial capabilities who feel constrained to become branch chiefs-- to the ultimate benefit of neither themselves nor the Directorate. MAGID recommends that a more systematic effort be made to loosen this connection. As part of this increased flexibility, a small number of GS-15 slots should be maintained in production offices for senior analysts of exceptional analytical skill and limited managerial ability. More quality step increases, travel opportunities, and schooling opportunities should be made available to these people. Responsibility: Office Chiefs.

- b. The Office of Political Research (OPR) has been established with a minimum of formal supervisors and will be extremely flexible in project management. OPR should be tasked to provide O/DDI with periodic reports on successes and problems related to this approach. Other components of the Directorate need not wait for the results of the OPR experience to loosen up their own organizations, however. In most of them, for example, there are situations appropriate for team projects. Responsibility: D/OPR.
- c. Office chiefs should convene semiannual half day sessions with their Division and Branch chiefs devoted to management problems.* Branch chiefs would be encouraged to offer suggestions for improving branch and division performance. They would be expected to describe their own problems and their efforts to cope with these. The branch chiefs also would evaluate potential branch chiefs under their supervision or that have come to their attention. Responsibility: Office Chiefs.
- d. Information on innovative management techniques or common but not widely recognized problems uncovered in these semiannual meetings should be disseminated on an office-wide, even Directorate-wide basis. Responsibility: Office/Staff Chiefs.

* MAGID recognizes the interrelationship between this recommendation and the developing requirements of Management By Objectives.

DATE: 28 Feb 74

TO: Mr. Proctor (Mr. Walsh has copy)

FROM:

SUBJECT: New MAGID Paper

REMARKS:

Attached is the latest MAGID paper, "Improving First-Line Supervision in the DDI." I think this is a very good paper. Especially noteworthy ideas are included in Paragraphs 1b and 3c.

You will recall that I mentioned the "assessment centers" idea at lunch the other day. Tomorrow I will bring in the reading material that I mentioned. I strongly recommend that you take the time to read through the material on these centers and then perhaps talk to the action officer in the Psychological Services Staff.

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Arrangements have been set for the working lunch on Wednesday, 6 March. The Executive Dining Room will send down sandwiches, salads, and drinks for everyone and will bill each person separately. I will have a roster of attendees for you on Monday.

*Researched to Executive Council Members
on 17 March 1974, will be discussed
at 29 March Executive Council*

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Remarks:

Attached for Mr. Proctor's review is our latest MAGID study--Improving First-Line Supervision in the DDI. [REDACTED]

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were on the task team that drafted the paper. As always, MAGID bears joint responsibility for the study and its recommendations. We welcome any opportunity to talk about our studies and expect to raise the matter with Mr. Proctor at our luncheon meeting with him next week. If there is interest in the "Assessment Center" concept, we have available a collection of related background material.

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Copy of attachment only handed out to Office
Heads and Staff Chiefs at Executive Council,
Tuesday, 19 March 1974.